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**Summary record of the 49th meeting (Chamber B)**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 19 July 2018, at 3 p.m.

*President*: Mr. Matjila (Vice-President) ..... (South Africa)

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*In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Matjila (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 5: High-level segment** (*continued*) (E/2018/61)

**(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council** (*continued*) (E/2018/64)

*General debate* (*continued*)

1. **The President** invited the ministerial meeting to resume its general debate on the theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies".

2. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan), Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, said that humanity was increasingly caught in a race against time, scrambling to find workable and affordable solutions to complex problems ranging from poverty and world hunger to climate change and the need for inclusive development. The broad scope of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a challenge in itself: policymakers and planners must ensure that all goals and targets received equal attention. Sadly, that was not happening. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in its *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2017*, had indicated that the Asia-Pacific region was currently failing to meet two thirds of the targets under the 2030 Agenda. The report painted a gloomy picture with regard to Goal 15, on life on land, and Goal 13, on climate action. It also indicated that the region was not on track to meet Goal 8, on decent work and economic growth, Goal 10, on reducing inequality, or Goal 16, on peace and justice, all largely because the fruits of rapid economic growth had yet to be equitably shared.

3. The lack of a sense of urgency with regard to certain Goals could be detrimental to all of humanity. Global flows of foreign direct investment were rapidly falling, and the mobilization of funds for sustainable development might be the hardest hit. Pakistan therefore welcomed the forthcoming high-level meeting on financing the 2030 Agenda, to be held in September 2018. With world hunger on the rise again, and conflicts, droughts and climate change directly affecting progress on Goal 1, on ending poverty, and Goal 2, on ending hunger, the international community needed to step up its response, with greater focus and honest commitments.

4. The Economic and Social Council was critical to the realization of the 2030 Agenda; however, States must take a leadership role in implementing certain of the Goals, in line with their particular policies, priorities and needs. Pakistan had been among the pioneers in that regard, taking full ownership of the sustainable development agenda: even prior to the formal adoption of the 2030 Agenda, it had started to recalibrate its national policies on the basis of sustainable principles. All the Sustainable Development Goals were embedded in the national plan, Pakistan 2025.

5. **Ms. Lopes De Jesus Pires** (Timor-Leste), Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations, said that Timor-Leste looked forward to presenting its voluntary national review in 2019. In view of the importance of democratic institutions and good governance to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring inclusiveness and sustaining peace, it was noteworthy that the eighth constitutional Government of Timor-Leste had recently been formed, following unassisted presidential and legislative elections.

6. With regard to Goal 6, on water and sanitation, her Government had made considerable efforts to improve access. Now, approximately 91 per cent of urban dwellers had access to the water supply and approximately 73 per cent had access to sanitation facilities. The Government continued to invest in strengthening access in rural areas, which currently stood at approximately 60 per cent and 30 per cent for water and sanitation, respectively. The Government was also boosting its efforts to improve water security, develop adaptation strategies and build resilience against climate change and natural disasters.

7. Under Goal 7, on access to energy, her Government had prioritized target 7.1, on universal access, and more than 70 per cent of the population currently had access to electricity. Substantial investments and efforts had been made to establish power plants, and access to the power grid was being improved. Achieving target 7.2, on renewable energy, was another priority for Timor-Leste, which had great potential for generating wind, solar and hydro power.

8. With regard to Goal 11, on cities and human settlements, her Government was prioritizing access to housing and improvement to transport systems, which would particularly benefit those living in the most remote, mountainous areas. Under Goal 12, on sustainable consumption and production, her Government had made substantial investments in agricultural infrastructure and machinery. It was providing farmers with subsidized seeds and fertilizer to increase sustainable production and reduce the

country's reliance on imports. Under Goal 15, on land degradation, her Government was promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, including sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation, as a central aspect of sustainable development. Those priorities also supported the diversification of the economy, of which nature-based tourism was a central pillar.

9. Timor-Leste had adopted the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2011–2020, and was one of the founders of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization. As a small island developing State and a least developed country, Timor-Leste welcomed the establishment of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, which it hoped would enable it to strengthen its capacity in science, technology and innovation. Lastly, her country was proud that a Timorese Ocean and Climate Youth Ambassador had joined the Peace Boat and the discussions on strategic partnerships and advocacy on oceans and climate change.

10. **Ms. Khyne** (Myanmar), Deputy Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations, said that peace, stability and development in Myanmar had been hindered by protracted internal conflicts for almost seven decades. Her Government was making relentless efforts to escape the trap of poverty and conflict, and to establish a democratic federal union. Myanmar continued to strive for full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its national development plans and policies. The 2016 national economic policy, which had focused on inclusive growth and development, encapsulated many of the Goals. Her Government was now formulating a comprehensive set of polices under the umbrella of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan. The Plan was closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda, as well as other global and regional development agendas.

11. In view of the vital need to improve access to safe water and sanitation, her Government had been carrying out integrated water resources management, in cooperation with partners. Myanmar was committed to achieving universal access to energy; in, it was working to improve the liquefied petroleum gas value chain and infrastructure to accelerate households' access to clean cooking and heating options. Her Government was making every effort to provide adequate, safe and affordable housing, develop infrastructure and sustainably manage its natural resources. Lastly, it was implementing strategies to halt deforestation, reverse land degradation, increase reforestation and protect threatened species.

12. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals was slow, and the world was not on track to achieve them. Disparities within and among countries were high and funding was inadequate; there was an urgent need for revitalized efforts with inclusive and collaborative partnerships.

13. **Mr. Martel** (Observer for the Pacific Islands Development Forum) said that the small island developing States of the Pacific were on the front line of global challenges. They were directly impacted by climate change, resource depletion, urban growth and threats to health and food security. Resilience was mandatory for Pacific island countries and territories, which continued to advocate urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Without climate resilience, they could not achieve sustainable development.

14. In 2015, Pacific leaders had adopted the Charter of the Pacific Islands Development Forum and launched a South-South multi-stakeholder forum that would ensure broad public participation in regional decision-making and in support of the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway). Now with 14 members, the Pacific Islands Development Forum was focusing on a distinctive model of green growth based on the blue economy. It worked to help build resilience at scale in the Pacific, through multi-stakeholder partnerships and its regional strategic plan, which contained tailored solutions for island resilience.

15. In early 2018, the Pacific Islands Development Forum had piloted the Island Resilience Initiative, in partnership with Precovery Labs and the Global Island Partnership, and with support from the Small Grants Programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Under the initiative, specific Sustainable Development Goals were prioritized at the local level with a view to building capacity and resilience. The partners were currently seeking to build on the outcome of pilot projects in Palau, Fiji and Marshall Islands and to expand the initiative to other islands in the Pacific, as well as the Caribbean.

16. **Mr. de Rojas** (Observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta) said that the Sovereign Order of Malta had cared for the poor and sick for more than 900 years. It focused on the most marginalized and vulnerable people on the globe, regardless of religion, ethnicity or nationality. The Order was currently managing more than 2,000 projects in over 120 countries around the world, assisting and supporting the human dignity of the neediest through medical, social and humanitarian activities. Its work was fully consistent with the "leave no one behind" theme of the 2030 Agenda and with the

focus of the 2018 high-level political forum on building sustainable and resilient societies.

17. Currently, a major area of work for the Order was helping refugees, migrants and displaced persons around the world, particularly in Africa and the Middle East. It provided first aid and emergency assistance, in addition to supporting long-term development projects in countries of origin, transit and destination. For instance, it was assisting refugees from Syria in hospitals at the border with Turkey, and its rescue teams in the Mediterranean were often the first to find migrants aboard boats. Those seeking asylum in Europe received medical care, legal assistance and the chance to participate in programmes run by the Order to facilitate their integration into local communities.

18. The previous week's successful conclusion to the negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was extremely encouraging. It demonstrated the international community's commitment to share strategies for capitalizing on the benefits of migration through the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development, while addressing its driving factors, such as armed conflict and climate change. The Order believed that a paradigm shift with regard to migration was needed, away from discrimination and xenophobia and towards recognition of the human rights, value, and dignity of every refugee. The Order stood ready to play an active role in the adoption of the Compact at the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, to be held in December 2018 in Morocco.

19. **Mr. Menann-Kouame** (Observer for the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions) said that the digital revolution was changing human societies, including ways of behaving, interacting and producing. Above all, it was improving living standards. People everywhere should make the most of the digital revolution to make a qualitative leap toward well-being and a better quality of life. Technological innovations had facilitated access to education, health, and public goods and services; transformative and productive processes had been improved; and information and communications technology (ICT) had narrowed the knowledge gap between individuals at all levels. Those advances made it realistic to hope that the Sustainable Development Goals could be attained.

20. However, that same digital revolution would also bring challenges with it — challenges that would affect the sustainability and resilience of both rural and urban societies. Continuous vigilance would be necessary to ensure that innovations and interconnectivity did not entrench inequality by deepening the digital divide. That said, the United Nations should capitalize on the potential of digital technologies to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

21. **Ms. Sall-Beye** (International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that ICT was crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. ITU applauded countries' efforts to leverage technology to achieve the Goals and reaffirmed its commitment to support countries as they digitalized and implemented new ICT measures in such critical areas as smart cities, health, digital entrepreneurship, digital literacy, e-waste, agriculture and smart governance. Countries were determined to seize the opportunities of the digital revolution, exploring innovations such as the Internet of things. ITU was at the forefront of the revolution; only a few weeks earlier, it had held its second Artificial Intelligence for Good Global Summit in Geneva, which had brought together leading minds from the fields of artificial intelligence and humanitarian action with a view to harnessing artificial intelligence to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

22. Infrastructure was critical to bridging the digital divide, along with innovation, investment and inclusivity. ITU commended countries that had made infrastructure a priority, especially when it benefited those living in rural and remote areas. ITU also congratulated the Secretary-General on the recent launch of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, and supported efforts to strengthen international cooperation in the digital space.

23. If not managed properly, the wave of technological change might deepen the divide between the digital "haves" and "have-nots" at a time when over half the world's population was still not using the Internet. Thus, ITU was committed to leaving no one offline and to working with countries and other stakeholders to invest in digital innovation, promote digital inclusion and reach out to youth, women and girls and the most vulnerable.

24. **Mr. Strong** (Observer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature) said that nature was fundamental to human well-being and sustainable development. Various nature-based solutions had been proposed over the course of the high-level political forum: conserving wetlands for water security, conserving mangroves and forests to reduce the impact of storm surges and other natural disasters, and establishing protected areas around cities that would provide cost-effective water security solutions and

spaces for recreation, while contributing to climate change regulation.

25. However, nature was under immense pressure, with biodiversity loss occurring at an alarming rate as a result of multiple drivers of species extinction and ecosystem degradation. Losses in biodiversity and land degradation could have major impacts on the health and functioning of ecosystems. The environment must be protected, restored and governed effectively and equitably for people to truly benefit from nature.

26. Immediate action was needed to achieve the targets for protecting the natural world under the 2030 Agenda, many of which were supposed to be achieved by 2020. Conservation worked, but it was not practised consistently or at sufficient scale. It was imperative that the international community adopt the relevant policies, mobilize the needed finances and decide how it would continue its work after 2020. Such planning should take place in conjunction with discussions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to build on synergies. The meetings of the high-level political forum had shown that there was a vast community eager to forge ahead with the transformative agenda, which inspired hope. Protecting nature was possible.

27. **Ms. Nusseibeh** (United Arab Emirates), Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, said that the United Arab Emirates was optimistic, but also concerned, about the results contained in the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/64), which pointed to an alarming lack of progress. For example, despite renewable energy having become the cheapest energy source in many countries, some 1 billion people remained without electricity and over 3 billion people were without clean cooking solutions. Poverty eradication and economic growth depended on affordable, reliable energy. Biodiversity and water were also areas of concern. However, it remained unclear what formal action would be taken by Member States or the United Nations.

28. The United Arab Emirates encouraged the United Nations to be more explicit in proposing ways to address gaps in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The high-level political forum should focus on collective responses to those challenges, and the specialized United Nations agencies should articulate strategies to address implementation gaps.

29. The United Arab Emirates was nonetheless encouraged at the repositioning of the United Nations development system, which would help to provide a more coherent response to the findings of the high-level political forum. Empowering resident coordinators to translate the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and national indicators into explicit requests for support from the United Nations system would result in more efficient use of United Nations resources to address national needs. The United Arab Emirates had made a decision early on to provide multi-year funding to support the new resident coordinator system on the ground in yearly amounts of US$ 500,000 until 2030. As a well-funded system was crucial to reforming the United Nations development system, the United Arab Emirates encouraged other potential donors to contribute generously and early to increase the reliability and predictability of the system.

30. The United Arab Emirates welcomed the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation and its focus on public-private partnership. Her country was pleased to see the United Nations expanding into the arena of technological cooperation for development, which could accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

31. **Ms. Cuevas Barron** (Observer for the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)) said that multilateralism and cooperation were the most important foundations of the work of IPU, which had 178 members representing 46,000 parliamentarians across the world and believed in democracy and the defence of human rights.

32. IPU was committed to transforming words into action and convinced that transforming the world started at the community level. For that reason, it coordinated closely with the United Nations: it had signed a cooperation agreement with the Organization and worked with national parliaments on the implementation of United Nations resolutions. More than 90 countries had supported the recently adopted General Assembly resolution proclaiming 30 June of each year as the International Day of Parliamentarianism.

33. The work of parliamentarians was fundamental to the advancement of the development agenda. They were responsible for ratifying and adopting development agreements, modifying national laws for the purpose of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, overseeing implementation and ensuring accountability, and formulating budgets to finance achievement of the Goals in the 12 years remaining until 2030. Parliamentarians were the natural link between the international agenda and the citizen's voice. IPU raised awareness and provided information to parliamentarians on the development agenda; recommended implementation strategies; held national, regional and global workshops; and encouraged the exchange of

experiences and best practices. It had generated national assessment mechanisms and had also developed a handbook for parliamentarians wishing to engage in self-assessment.

34. **Mr. Pinheiro** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that ILO had recently redirected its strategic and programmatic orientation towards the 2030 Agenda, including in the global dialogue leading up to its centenary in 2019. The nexus between economic growth, the environment and decent work was a core issue in the implementation of the Agenda and in the future of labour markets.

35. While 1.2 billion jobs — including jobs in farming, fishing and forestry — relied on the effective management and sustainability of a healthy environment, environmental degradation threatened ecosystem services and the jobs that depended on them. The effects were particularly acute for the most vulnerable workers.

36. The transition to a green economy was not only urgent for the sake of the planet but it was also compatible with improvements in decent work. A key finding of a flagship ILO report, *World Economic and Social Outlook*, was that some countries had succeeded in improving labour market outcomes while decoupling growth from carbon emissions. The report showed that tensions between the economy and the environment could be converted into opportunities. An effective transition to a greener economy through appropriate policy choice could generate up to 24 million new jobs. The ILO *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* provided a policy framework and practical tool to help all countries manage the transition to low-carbon economies.

37. **Mr. Tavares** (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)) said that three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, hunger was on the rise and urgent action was needed to reverse that trend. At the same time, obesity and other forms of malnutrition were a growing concern in developed and developing countries. While over 800 million people were undernourished, one third of food produced was wasted or lost, and so were precious natural resources that needed to be sustainably used and managed.

38. Rapid urbanization and growing populations in cities required increased supplies of food, services and social protection. While the urban population was expanding, extreme poverty was concentrated in rural areas where limited access to water, energy, health and education services were affecting women, children and youth in particular. Approximately 80 per cent of the world's poor were rural dwellers. The challenges they faced could not be dealt with in isolation or in opposition to each other. He called for a new rural-urban alliance, with comprehensive interventions to ensure that food systems remained inclusive, resilient and sustainable so as to leave no one behind in either rural or urban areas.

39. Few human activities connected all the dimensions of sustainable development as closely as inclusive and sustainable food systems. They could directly and positively influence the availability of food, the quality of diets, efforts to address poverty, and the creation of decent jobs, contributing to the health, well-being and resilience of rural populations. Transforming food systems was also necessary to ensure that agriculture in its broader sense — from crop production to fisheries — supported the sustainable use and management of natural resources. Sustainable agriculture was critical to increasing efficient water use, protecting and restoring ecosystems and halting biodiversity loss. Sustainable and inclusive food systems could be successful pathways to sustainable development, but only if the 2030 Agenda was holistically advanced.

40. **Mr. El Nour** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that migrants made a positive contribution to the transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies. Migration was a human reality of great relevance to development and economic growth.

41. A large number of Member States had already reported on the outcome of their voluntary national reviews. While 43 countries had compiled a report the year before, 47 States had presented reports in 2018, and eight of those covered progress made on specific migration-related issues.

42. The focus of the 2019 high-level political forum would be Goal 10, including target 10.7 on facilitating orderly, safe and regular migration. To that end, IOM encouraged country teams to work through the UNDAF process to prioritize migration. In collaboration with UNDP and the Global Migration Group, it was developing a training manual to help Member States mainstream migration into national development plans. IOM would also work with Member States and regional organizations to integrate migration into regional and South-South cooperation processes. Since, to a large extent, migration took place at the regional level, substantive remittances and other contributions made by migrants to their home countries must be considered in regional development processes. IOM would work with member States to ensure coherence between migration and related policy domains, such as natural disasters and

climate change, which had the potential to set back development gains.

43. Adequate and timely data were of paramount importance. IOM was working with the Economist Intelligence Unit to develop a migration governance indicator, which would provide a comprehensive picture to countries as they managed migration, and with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to help populate indicator 10.7.2 of the Migration Governance Framework on the number of countries having well-managed migration policies.

44. **Mr. Toscano-Rivalia** (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction) said that incorporation of disaster risk reduction strategies into national plans was essential for risk-informed sustainable development, and expressed appreciation for countries' efforts in that direction.

45. Target E of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 — namely, to substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 — was critical to achieving the other targets and Sustainable Development Goals. Concerted efforts and international cooperation were needed to meet that target by 2020. Greater focus was also needed to develop strategies to include the voices of women, girls, persons with disabilities, the elderly and youth.

46. Disaster risk reduction must necessarily be incorporated into national financing frameworks and official development assistance (ODA). Disclosure of disaster risk was essential to encourage long-term, risk-informed investment by both the public and private sectors. All stakeholders had a shared responsibility to take action to reduce disaster risk.

47. The 2019 meeting of the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly would be an important opportunity to assess the extent to which the 17 Goals were being implemented in a risk-informed manner. It would be critical to embed disaster risk reduction in the reviews of the Sustainable Development Goals going forward. Systematically engaging the Sendai Framework focal point in national mechanisms for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including in the voluntary national review process, could provide meaningful input to those deliberations.

48. **Mr. Emtairah** (Director, Department of Energy, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)) said that the Sustainable Development Goals being reviewed in the 2018 high-level political forum were vital for the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development that promoted clean energy solutions and reduced environmental footprints, contributing to the conservation of natural resources and supporting the implementation of Goals 6, 12 and 15. Industries supported by energy-efficient policies, technologies and practices as well as access to affordable and renewable energy would bolster national efforts to follow a low-carbon and low-emission growth pattern to support the implementation of Goal 7. Those efforts could propel smart industries and industrial clusters in urban industrial zones to achieve resource efficiency and develop the required industrial competitiveness for local business markets, supporting the implementation of Goal 11.

49. The 2018 Vienna Energy Forum Special Session, organized with a view to providing further input to the high-level political forum on the review of Goal 7, had identified multiple sustainable development benefits that arose from the three trends emerging out of energy systems transformation: decarbonization, digitization and decentralization. UNIDO had found that the demand to simplify the often complex problems associated with achieving sustainable energy and combating climate changed had opened the space for home-grown innovation and entrepreneurship in clean energy.

50. Drawing on expertise, initiatives and lessons learned in inclusive and sustainable industrial development, UNIDO wished to underscore the role of industrialization in development and poverty reduction. UNIDO, along with its member States and partners, continued to embrace the 2030 Agenda by providing equal opportunities and equitable distribution of the benefits of industrialization to all countries, peoples and segments of society.

51. **Ms. Davtyan** (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)) said that she would focus on the interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 11, making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, and the AIDS response.

52. Cities bore a huge proportion of national HIV burdens. HIV prevalence was higher in urban than rural areas; about one quarter of all people living with HIV were residing in about 200 cities. Cities had both a comparative advantage and challenges to address in combating the AIDS epidemic. Large numbers of people could be reached in cities to scale up the response, providing cost-effective health and social services. However, too many urban residents lived in slums, facing poverty, violence and human rights violations as well as economic and social inequality, including lack of access to essential health services, all of which increased exposure and vulnerability to HIV.

53. An effective AIDS response could offer a platform to advance urban development by promoting better health, social inclusion and gender equality. Conversely, safe, healthy and sustainable cities could make a critical contribution to efforts to tackle AIDS. In 2014, the Executive Director of UNAIDS and the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Mayor of Paris and the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care had jointly launched the Paris Declaration on Fast-Track Cities: Ending the Aids Epidemic. Since then, over 250 cities and municipalities had committed to accelerating their AIDS responses and addressing the disparities in access to basic services, social justice and economic opportunity. Furthermore, the New Urban Agenda embraced the commitment of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

54. While the global AIDS response was at a precarious point, with partial success giving way to complacency, immediate action could ensure the achievement of the 2020 targets. UNAIDS called on Member States to accelerate and increase efforts to honour the shared commitment.

55. **Mr. Khiari** (Tunisia), Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations, said that his country had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its own development plan, which covered the period 2016-2020. That development plan, in line with his country's desire to implement Agenda 2063 of the African Union, consisted of five focus areas: good governance, promotion of the national economy, human development and social integration, regional development, and green economy and sustainable development.

56. Tunisia was making every effort to expand water resources, improve the management of running water and dam construction, and promote public-private partnerships to exploit non-traditional resources particularly through the desalination of seawater and salt water from aquifers. It also planned to rehabilitate treatment plants.

57. With regard to Goal 7, Tunisia supported the production of clean energy and initiatives to encourage private investment in that area, the construction of new power plants for electricity production, and the use of natural gas to reduce energy costs.

58. Among the strategies for achieving Goal 11 were a commitment to equitable land use, while respecting ecological balance; the complete integration of urban and rural areas; and the equitable distribution of basic infrastructure, taking into account the need for environmental preservation, climate change adaptation and post-disaster measures.

59. Under Goal 12 on sustainable production and consumption patterns, Tunisia had launched projects to develop renewable energy and environmental and biological technologies. It also attached great importance to creating innovative institutions, and to furthering applied scientific research and the training of engineers in promising fields.

60. In line with Goal 15, Tunisia sought to protect and maintain its natural wealth by addressing the problems of indiscriminate hunting, drought, and excessive exploitation of farmland, and by protecting marine resources and the region's biodiversity.

61. **Ms. Blickley** (International Planned Parenthood Federation), speaking on behalf of the major group for women, said that achieving climate, gender, development and trade justice required global solidarity and actions informed by local needs. Cross-boundary structural issues often had intense impacts on local communities, as the communities were forced to cope and respond with innovative solutions that did not necessarily succeed in addressing the deep and structural roots of the problem. The intersectional nature of the Sustainable Development Goals reflected the complexity of women's realities.

62. The major group for women wished to offer several recommendations. Firstly, actively supporting the meaningful participation of women in decision-making could be possible if Governments created formal opportunities to ensure that the most marginalized groups of women and women most affected by policies and programmes participated in their development. Secondly, investing in the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data would help close the gender data gap and ensure effective budgeting and policymaking. Thirdly, integrating strategies to address gender-discriminatory norms into all policies and programmes of the Sustainable Development Goals would enhance women's ability to participate in public life and achieve equality. That included addressing early and forced marriage, gender-based violence and power dynamics that held women and girls back, as well as the stigmas surrounding both menstrual health and women's roles in the sustainable energy sector.

63. The major group also wished to stress the importance of valuing, reducing and redistributing women's unpaid care work. Gender-responsive infrastructure, social protection programmes and care services would reduce the disproportionate domestic burden on women and girls that interfered with their education and employment prospects. Also,

gender-responsive budgeting would allow Governments to analyse the gender-differentiated impacts of budgets and allocate funds to achieving gender equality targets. Moreover, protecting women's rights to own and control land and property, energy and other productive resources by eliminating discriminatory laws and putting in place proactive policies was of paramount importance. In conclusion, she called for accountability from the local to the global level, bolstered by input from women's and feminist groups and rigorous and transparent reviews, including in the high-level political forum.

64. **Mr. Bojanic** (European Youth Forum), speaking on behalf of the major group for children and youth, said that the meaningful inclusion and participation of children and young people were necessary both for building sustainable and resilient societies, and for the success of the 2030 Agenda. Children and young people were vital agents of change; their ability to have their views heard, engage in civic action, and participate in public decision-making must be protected, especially in the cases of those who were most marginalized and deprived.

65. Societies might be more ready to respond effectively to change if they took into consideration the ideas and contributions of children and young people with regard to sustainable development and paid greater heed to evidence and data on what actually worked and how it affected different groups of people. Unsustainable practices were putting the future of children and young people in jeopardy. The misguided assumption that economic growth produced benefits for all must give way to a system that had the well-being of people and planet — and a different understanding of progress — at its core. Anti-collectivism, the backlash against multilateralism, and backtracking on human rights were undermining efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Local ownership and capacity were needed to build sustainability and resilience, but international momentum and responsibility must not waver.

66. **Mr. Vázquez Alarcón** (Observer for the International Federation for Family Development) said that his organization was leading the Inclusive Cities for Sustainable Families Project in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 11 and the New Urban Agenda to combat the challenges that the expected increase in the world's urban population — (from 55 per cent in 2018 to 60 per cent in 2030) — would pose. Two focus group meetings held in Italy and Brazil had brought together experts, policymakers and civil society members to determine how modern cities could be resilient and provide services to families.

67. City designs should take into account all families and social groups, incorporate flexible urban and environmentally sustainable planning, and ensure that social services were readily available to all. They should emphasize access to housing, including intergenerational arrangements to provide care for the elderly and affordable housing for youth. Closer linkages between new technologies and social inclusion — for example, through training for older persons — could help to bridge the digital gap. Accessible and affordable childcare facilities close to the parents' residence or workplace, parenting and intergenerational education, other programmes to address the needs of vulnerable families (including single-parent, large, and migrant families), and a welcoming environment on city streets would be equally important. Such efforts would ensure the safe growth of all family members and of the society as a whole.

68. **Mr. Carvalho** (WaterAid), speaking on behalf of the major group for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), said that the world was not on track to achieve the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Increasing inequality, the lack of a sense of urgency, and diminishing accountability all pointed to the need for immediate reorientation and restructuring towards equity, human rights and justice. In spite of the 191 Member States which had voted in favour of the ministerial declaration, the proceedings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development had revealed a continuing lack of commitment and insufficient leadership in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

69. Unlike the Human Rights Council, the high-level political forum could not mandate parallel or shadow reports on country-level implementation; that should be taken into account in the 2019 review of forum modalities. He welcomed the initiative to pre-approve one side event by each major group and stakeholder group during the 2019 meeting of the high-level political forum. It was regrettable that during the current high-level political forum, civil society had been granted only 20 per cent of the time allotted to official side events, while an entire day had been dedicated to a closed business forum. There had been fewer opportunities for major and stakeholder groups to intervene, especially in the meetings on voluntary national reviews: one two-minute statement had clearly not been sufficient to represent them all. The current platform was proving insufficient for meaningful and constructive dialogue, with presenters being given inadequate amounts of time to properly express their concerns.

70. The high-level political forum must lead by example. It must create the conditions for meaningful and constructive dialogue and serve as a true platform for learning and accountability. The major group for NGOs looked forward to the meeting of the Heads of State in 2019 at the opening of the review of the modalities of the high-level political forum; at the same time, it was deeply concerned that the forum was not living up to expectations regarding its role in either monitoring and review or addressing the crisis of the larger global structures in which it attempted to intervene. The major group for NGOs rededicated itself to ensuring that justice spoke louder than entrenched power and hoped its energy and commitment would counteract the forces of complacency that had set into the multilateral system. In conclusion, he called on Governments to use the high-level political forum to meaningfully advance the 2030 Agenda through leadership and political guidance. Political, economic, social and environmental paradigms must shift towards human rights and dignity for all.

71. **The President** said that the concerns expressed by the representative of the major group for non-governmental organizations had been noted and would be duly addressed.

72. **Mr. Parmegiani** (Observer for the Legião da Boa Vontade) said that it was crucial to recognize the importance of civil society and the grass-roots movement in the intergovernmental process. His organization was dedicated to combating all forms of poverty through a network of 95 education centres across seven countries: Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Portugal and the United States of America. Through educational and social programmes aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, and with the help of the very communities it served, the Legião da Boa Vontade had impacted more than 600,000 vulnerable people in 2017 alone. That large-scale mobilization of solidarity in action had demonstrated the power of people to respond to global challenges when given the right opportunity.

73. Resilience and sustainability would come about through re-education and the promotion of holistic human development for a more solidary, altruistic and ecumenical society. His organization's bottom-up approach was a bold and concrete alternative strategy towards achieving the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda. Moral and spiritual development was as important as economic and social policy or technological progress, and could act as a means to eliminate inequality, violence, and indifference.

74. **Mr. Jensen**, (Observer for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences) said that he, Mr. Elzinga and Mr. Ashenaft would be speaking on behalf of mountain communities and wished to thank the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences for providing them that opportunity. He noted that climate change and migration had aggravated the situation of mountain communities, already among the poorest and most neglected communities in the world. According to a recent joint study by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat, an estimated 39 per cent of the mountain population in developing countries was vulnerable to food insecurity. From 2000 to 2012, there had been a 30 per cent increase in the number of mountain people vulnerable to food insecurity, while their population had increased by only 16 per cent.

75. **Mr. Elzinga** (Observer for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences) said that targets under Sustainable Development Goals 6 and 15 — namely, targets 6.6, 15.1 and 15.4 — must be addressed to ensure the well-being of mountain populations. Since 2007, Utah Valley University, with the support of the Mountain Partnership, had involved students in activities to achieve mountain targets. The Utah International Mountain Forum, (a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University), had addressed a number of real-world problems facing mountain communities.

76. **Mr. Ashenaft** (Observer for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences) said that the Utah International Mountain Forum had advocated for mountain women during the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and had reported on jointly hosting the International Women of the Mountains Conferences with their Kyrgyz peers, in implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/24 entitled "International Year of Mountains, 2002". The Forum's recommendations regarding the crucial role women played in the implementation of two mountain targets were included in the 2016 report of the Secretary-General on sustainable mountain development (A/71/256). The students had raised and contributed $250,000 to achievement of the mountain targets. The Utah International Mountain Forum model demonstrated that students could and must play an active role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That model could be used by universities in rural and mountainous areas worldwide to provide similar benefits to students, and to transform mountain communities towards sustainable and resilient societies.

77. **Ms. Jappie** (Observer for the International Trade Centre (ITC)) said that her organization was the joint

development agency of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations, through the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Using the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals as a basic framework, it worked with partners to help micro-, small, and medium-sized companies in developing countries to become more competitive in international markets. International trade was highlighted in both the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development as a crucial catalyst for inclusive growth, job creation, and poverty reduction, and as an important contribution to sustainable development.

78. Despite those advantages, trade had come to be depicted as an unwelcome constraint on national sovereignty and a zero-sum game. The solution to rectifying trade imbalances was not to abandon multilateral cooperation but rather to make it more transparent, inclusive, and efficient, so that it could work for the 99 per cent. To that end, ITC focused particular attention on the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, sub-Saharan African countries and post-conflict countries in providing support to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those that employed vulnerable populations such as women and youth. Focusing on 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production, the International Trade Centre worked to develop trade for sustainable development, with the aim of helping businesses see their position in the value chain and become more sustainable. Her organization, along with a trade hub of multilateral organizations in Geneva and its parent organizations, UNCTAD and WTO, would be making every effort to harness the power of trade for the 2030 Agenda.

79. **Mr. Joshi** (Observer for Vaagdhara) said that changing socioeconomic, political, and climatic conditions had left the once thriving indigenous communities in the western part of India vulnerable and economically deprived. Farming had become a non-viable occupation, owing to increased input costs, harsh climatic conditions and loss of traditional knowledge of low-cost high-nutrition farming.

80. To ensure the sovereignty and security of the Indian indigenous community and maintain its identity and dignity, he urged the promotion of eco-friendly and sustainable farming practices which embraced traditional knowledge and wisdom and were aimed at curbing or ending the use of chemical fertilizers, while promoting soil conservation. In addition, every child must have opportunities for growth and development through education, child labour must be eradicated and urban migration must be checked. Optimal utilization of budgetary allocations for tribal development would be crucial to those ends; in that connection, government offices should be held accountable for any inappropriate spending.

81. **Mr. Borrero** (International Indian Treaty Council), speaking on behalf of the major group for indigenous peoples, said that with 80 per cent of the world's remaining biodiversity situated in the territories of indigenous communities, the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples was recognized as critical to combating the global climate crisis. Indigenous peoples, who made up 15 per cent of the world's extreme poor but only 5 per cent of its population, were often linked to sustainability and had much to share and contribute at the global, national and local levels.

82. The resilience of indigenous peoples had its roots in generations of observation and their respectful relationship with their lands, territories and resources, as well as their sheer will to survive after enduring long-term intergenerational violations of their most basic human rights by external forces that coveted those same lands, territories and resources. Climate change and economic globalization placed additional pressures on indigenous peoples, especially the effects of resource-intensive and extractive industries, which, in many cases, led to large-scale displacement, loss of livelihood and food insecurity.

83. States must fulfil their obligation to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples, including their right to self-determination as set forth in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development. Those rights should not be negatively affected by broader development processes; development projects must not be launched without the informed and prior consent of indigenous peoples or ensuring that the benefits of development efforts would be equitably distributed and target the reduction of inequality. The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals should be monitored through the collection of disaggregated data and in collaboration with indigenous peoples. He wished to emphasize that the resilience of indigenous peoples did not absolve States from the solemn commitment to respect their rights and freedoms, given that the universal nature of those rights and freedoms was beyond question.

84. **Ms. Craviotto** (International Trade Union Confederation), speaking on behalf of the major group

for workers and trade unions, said that eradicating poverty, addressing climate change, ensuring decent work and quality education, reducing inequalities, and building peaceful and inclusive societies for all were among the remaining challenges to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development had revealed that action, ambition and public financing had thus far been insufficient to overcome those obstacles.

85. The major group for workers and trade unions called for a just transition, a fast and fair transformation towards environmentally sustainable and socially responsible societies, and social dialogue between communities, Governments, workers and employers to create local ownership around that transition, build consensus and inclusion, facilitate policy implementation and strengthen democratic processes. Such a transition must ensure that no one was left behind in efforts to reduce emissions, protect the climate and advance social and economic justice. Gender-responsive and universally accessible free public education and health and social services were vital to sustainable economic and social development, and to combating poverty and inequalities.

86. Significant investments in infrastructure would be needed to implement the Goals. The major group for workers and trade unions believed that public investment would be best suited for that purpose and was concerned at the increasing privatization of public services, including through public-private partnerships, which could undermine quality, equity and human rights, as well as incur additional costs in the long run. She therefore called for government support of regulatory and policy frameworks, including due diligence, enabling the private sector to contribute to the realization of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

87. **Mr. Vachon** (World Federation of Engineering Organizations), speaking on behalf of the major group for the scientific and technological community, said that science and engineering played an important role in establishing sustainable and resilient societies. The science-policy interface was vital to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Given the rising population in urban environments, particularly in Asia and Africa, and the relative lack of industrialization in those regions, the United Nations should encourage standards-based frameworks to ensure development that aligned infrastructure services with urban planning.

88. The United Nations should encourage Member States to invest in international cooperation in science, technology and engineering, as they were key to building sustainable and resilient societies, especially in the least developed countries. It should also encourage support for the major group's activities to promote international cooperation in science, technology and engineering with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Technical, institutional and community capacity-building should be expanded; to that end, one aim of the World Federation's Plan 2030 was to scale up efforts to strengthen engineering education and capacity-building worldwide.

89. Engineering and science practice should be transformed to address all aspects of sustainability. In that connection, the United Nations should encourage the broad adoption of the World Federation's Model Code of Practice for Sustainable Development. Given the interconnectedness of the Goals, scientists and engineers would have to acknowledge diversity across disciplines and the intellectual traditions of different geographical regions. Recognizing the complexity of advancing the ambitious 2030 Agenda, the major group for the scientific and technological community was committed to supporting evidence-based prioritization and innovation to that end. Full life-cycle costing was vital to ensuring sustainable infrastructure services and should be encouraged by the United Nations at all scales.

90. **Mr. Griffith** (Griffith Foods), speaking on behalf of the major group for business and industry, said that business reaffirmed and recognized its responsibility and support for the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the inclusive involvement of representative business and industry organizations.

91. In the presentations of voluntary national reviews, reporting on the role of business had intensified. The business community was tremendously encouraged by the number of Member States which had mentioned the importance of engaging with businesses at the global, national and local levels to ensure the success of the 2030 Agenda.

92. Companies and business associations participated and invested in efforts to end poverty, advance sustainability and encourage prosperity to achieve the Goals despite increased uncertainty owing to rising tariffs. The major group for business and industry encouraged respect for a rules-based trading system and stressed the importance of the World Trade Organization and the multilateral system. Business and industry played an important role in leaving no one behind in the transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies. In conclusion, he said that businesses were in

a unique position to create positive solutions that drove sustainable profits through sustainable practices.

93. **Mr. Riley** (Global Ageing Network), speaking on behalf of the stakeholder group on ageing, said that both developed and developing societies worldwide were experiencing an unprecedented ageing megatrend. If advancement towards the Sustainable Development Goals were underpinned by attention to older persons and the protection of their human rights, all cohorts of society would benefit.

94. The challenges, risks and problems addressed by the Sustainable Development Goals were magnified for older persons across urban and rural settings. Older persons experienced complex forms of exclusion and marginalization based on a wide variety of factors, including socially ingrained ageism compounded by gender, ethnicity and other biases. Older persons did not have equal access to adequate housing, public services and other resources, which constituted a violation of their human rights. The quest to leave no one behind must mean inclusion for all people of all ages throughout their life course.

95. Older persons worldwide should be recognized as an underpinning pillar of the planning and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The stakeholder group on ageing called for the full participation of older persons in the planning and design of initiatives to achieve the Goals; mechanisms to foster the independence and prospering of older persons, including access to preventative health care and other quality services; and a commitment that all activities towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would seek to protect older persons from neglect and discrimination.

96. **Mr. Moe** (Volunteer Groups Alliance), speaking on behalf of the stakeholder group for volunteers, said that volunteer labour, with a billion participants worldwide, was not motivated by compensation and therefore was the most valuable type of labour. Volunteers were not motivated by money, but rather by an understanding that the cost of doing nothing would be too expensive in the long run.

97. Disaster response was an indicator of how strong and resilient communities could be, for example, in situations where volunteers were the first to respond and stayed the longest to rebuild. The best way to ensure that volunteers responded effectively was for Governments to create a supportive environment and a culture of volunteerism before disaster struck. The year before, a massive volunteer effort in India had typified how, with the appropriate time, energy, coordination and resources, volunteers had combated deforestation and addressed Sustainable Development Goal 15.

98. Admittedly, volunteers were not the sole solution to the world's most pressing problems and, though volunteerism was a worldwide phenomenon, participation and effectiveness varied. Volunteerism thrived when it was politically and financially supported by legislation, policies, and partnerships — and when it was measured, recognized and encouraged.

99. He urged countries to establish or enhance programmes, laws, schemes, policies and campaigns that encouraged volunteerism; measure and communicate volunteer contributions to attainment of the Goals; and engage volunteers and civil society as partners in collecting and analysing data on the Sustainable Development Goals.

100. **Mr. Lappalainen** (Finnish Non-Governmental Development Organization (NGDO) Platform to the European Union (KEHYS)), speaking on behalf of the stakeholder group for education and academia, said that education and lifelong learning played a major role in the transformative agenda for more environmentally sustainable societies, and were crucial to achieving the Goals under review in the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

101. The biggest challenge in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 was financing. Domestic budgets remained insufficient, ODA had decreased, and proposals to close the financing gap, through loans would lead to debt. Lack of resource allocation had given rise to increasing privatization in some countries, with reports of for-profit actors taking advantage of gaps in public provision, undermining the responsibility of Governments to advance the 2030 Agenda.

102. Problems related to education policy included insufficient attention to gender equality and the status of teachers; neglect of youth and adult education; and the persistence of violence, conflict and emergency situations. In order to contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, education and lifelong learning should be regarded as a human right, and should be of good quality, equitable, inclusive, free and accessible for all. Support for education and lifelong learning would enhance the linkage between the three dimensions of sustainable development; in addition, human rights, sustainable development and global citizenship should be mainstreamed across curricula.

103. **Ms. De Guzman** (Foundation for Environmental Stewardship), speaking on behalf of the Sendai stakeholders group, said that the group represented a broad and diverse swath of society — urban and rural

communities, professionals and those living in poverty, and representatives of Government and civil society — united in their commitment to disaster risk reduction. In that context, local communities and civil society should explore all possible mechanisms to give voice to their needs and build partnerships. Working with local and subnational governments to establish political will was vital to institutionalizing a commitment to those new development practices. Ensuring that no one was left behind called for a people-centred approach that was empowering, drove resources, built capacity and supported communities where action was most urgently needed.

104. The stakeholder group encouraged countries to reinforce the urgency and instrumentality of risk-informed development; raise awareness about the impact and feasibility of engaging all stakeholders in the sustainable development agenda process; make use of science, technologies, indigenous and local knowledge; and promote accountability in the national delivery of global agreements.

105. The Sendai stakeholders group was ready to collect data on disaster risk and ensure that it would be accessible to all; build local actors' resilience capacity by educating youth, particularly girls, and training them to become agents of change and leaders in building resilience; and devolve financial and technical resources to the local level and invest in integrated community-led resilience action.

106. As the 2020 target for increasing the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies drew near, Governments were urged to engage all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring processes.

*The meeting rose at 5 p.m.*